

2/9/2024

**FUN
FLAPS
TO LIFT!**

KNOCK, KNOCK!

WHO'S THERE?

60:1

The Omen

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Staff Box: (In order of appearance)

Maxine: Bowser (so he can get with Luigi)

Mia: King Boo for the money and I'm leaving him for Rosalina. She's got some loooong legs

Jay: Dimentio

Willow: Mr. Bullet Bill

Nicholas/Mae: Dry Bowser

Finch: [REDACTED]

Luke: yoshi because there would always be another and I'm not good enough

Hazel: [REDACTED]

Jordan: [REDACTED]

Lin: Kamek

Sam: Wario

Raymond: [REDACTED]

María: A piranha plant

Leo: count bleck (jay was our divorce lawyer)

Front Cover: Mia Sanghvi

Back Cover: María Baxter

Submissions are due always, constantly, so submit forever. You can submit in any format (NO PDFS PLEASE!) by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, or email. Get your submissions to omen@hampshire.edu, the Omen Office, Mia's mailbox (1084), Willow's mailbox (1265), or Max's mailbox (0509).

Policy

The Omen is an every-other-week-ly publication that is the world's only example of the consistent application of a straightforward policy: we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that break neither the law nor the Hampshire College Student Handbook. Send your impassioned yet poorly-thought-out rants, self-insertion fanfiction, MS Paint comics, and whiny emo poetry to omen@hampshire.edu; we'll publish it all, and we're happy to do it. The Omen is about giving you a voice, no matter how little you deserve it. Since its founding in December of 1992 by Stephanie Cole, the Omen has hardly ever missed an issue, making it Hampshire's longest-running publication.

Your Omen submission (you're submitting right now, right?) might not be edited, and we can't promise any spellchecking either, so any horrendous mistakes are your fault, not ours. We do promise not to insert comical spelling mistakes in submissions to make you look foolish.

Your submission must include the name you use around campus: an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views. Views expressed in the Omen do not necessarily reflect the views of the Omen editor, the Omen staff, or anyone, anywhere, living or dead.

The Omen staff consists of whoever shows up for Omen layout, which take place every other Friday at 7:00 p.m. in the basement of Merrill A. You should come and answer the staff box question. We don't bite. You can find the Omen every other Monday in Saga, the post office, online at expelallo.men, and just about any other place we can find to put it.

Find all issues here!



Views in the Omen (5)
Do not necessarily (7)

Reflect the staff's views (5)

EDITORIAL

Sniffs Crow Butt

by Max, Willow, and Mia

Hello again!

I'm very happy to be back from winter break and work on this funky little publication again with my favorite co-editors Maxine and Willow! :)

This semester marks the 60th volume of The Omen, which was first published back in January 1993. Can you believe this bébé is 31 years old?? It's so incredible that I get to be a part of this long history, and I'm so excited to see what this publication will look like in the years to come.

Here's a little blurb on the Hampshire website about the creation of The Omen that I would like to share:

“The first issue of The Omen is released. Editor, Stephanie Cole, calls it a ‘newsmagazine’ that will come out regularly and frequently to get the news out ‘to be acted upon and reacted about.’ The Omen is open to all submissions from the community. [The Omen: January 23, 1993]”

Of course, things have definitely changed since our founding (with good reason!), but I find that the core message is somewhat the same: to uplift the voices of the Hampshire community that often go unheard. I don't know if that's what Stephanie Cole and the other early editors intended, but looking through many of the previous issues, it rings true for me.

In all honesty, it's pretty stressful to hold so much history on our shoulders, but I'm also excited to see how The Omen will change (or remain the same) as Maxine, Willow and I continue to grow as editors.

Before I end this, I just want to say thank you to those who have submitted their work to The Omen and those who read (and continue to read!) our publication. We really wouldn't have made it this far without y'all!

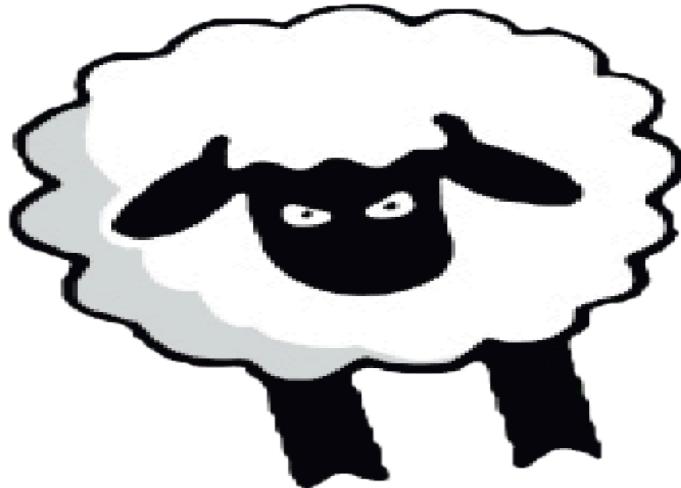
Here's to another groovy semester of The Omen! I can't wait for y'all to see what we've planned! :)

With much [REDACTED],

Mia 

maybe i'm blowing this out of proportion, but even since the end of winter break i just can't seem to stop being amazed at the fact that people can change and grow as individuals, in ways that might never have been possible at an earlier point in their lives! it's harder to explain when you don't know him, but the reason i'm so astounded by this revelation is that my friend todd from high school is the one who brought it about, & even just a month ago he'd have been among the last people i could've imagined looking inside themselves & deciding to make a change. that's not to say that he's lacking in character or ambition! todd has always been driven, and if he recognized something that needed to be changed in himself i'm sure he would work to fix it. instead, i am shocked that he has grown the way he has because i did not realize he had the emotional awareness to even identify the problems he was struggling with. the fact is that as long as i've known him, todd has had his heart set on becoming a lawyer, and because he never really questioned the path that goal would take him down, he always seemed kind of oblivious to what he really wanted out of his life. when he went to princeton last year, i expected more of the same, and that's generally what i got, but this past semester it seems he had a rough time that forced him to finally confront what he wanted out of college, & he decided completely on his own that he wants to be an editor and an author rather than a lawyer! as he described it to me at color me mine over winter break, he wants do work that allows him to express himself creatively & that allows him to help people directly, and because law did not seem to offer that, he changed the path he has been on for probably around a decade at this point! i may be flippant in my writing about this whole situation, but i have to say that his resolution really inspired me, and it's helped me in the last few weeks to commit to the path i am taking in school myself. if todd is able to look inside himself & recognize what he wants out of the next two years of college, then gosh darnit, so am i, and so i hope are all the other people in my life who are struggling right now to find direction in their own lives.

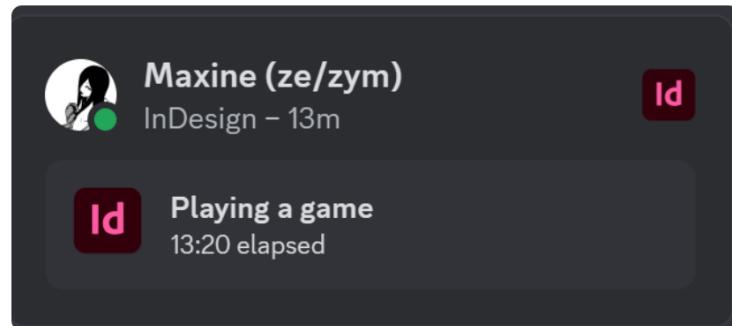
- willow



February 5, 2024



petrichorslug Today at 10:10 PM
"Playing a game"



Maxine (ze/zym) Today at 10:10 PM



petrichorslug Today at 10:10 PM



Omen game

"First things first. Hampshire is a graveyard for music, dances, and newspapers" (Cole, 1993)

My relationship with the Omen seems to be one during the night, as it was one late night last semester when I decided to read through the Omen archvies (RIP Bork) and really understand why my friend Leo was an editor. Sure I knew of the Omen for the memes, but, where did it come from? (Where did it go..). Reading Cole's first editorial sparked something in me, I felt driven to do **something** outside of academics. So I took a shot, and ended up as an Omen editor.

Most of my relationship with the Omen is with it's creaky skeleton, when editing I forget that people will read this thing once it is ready to be sent to doopies. Except when I begin an editorial, sometimes it takes five sentence rewrites until I feel confident that my writing doesn't sound super stinky. I become aware of the Hampshire audience, and that is daunting.

So, to all of you who submit despite that feeling, keep on doing it. The Omen was made for **us**, it is a paper run by students for students. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to discover I really love editing (and for something to do during class when I can't focus).

Time to finish this up, it's 9pm on a Thursday, I gotta finish editing! I bid you with these final words of wisdom:

At the end of the world, there will only be three things left: cockroaches, twinkies, and the Omen Erotica Issue (coming soon!)

- Max



SECTION SPEAK

Every Song in Glee and Whether or not it's better than the Original by Finch Arnold: Season 2B

Yes, I'm still doing this. Sometimes I realize I've committed myself to writing 12 to 13 articles about Glee and I weep. If I don't finish this before the end of 2024, someone should do the kind thing and euthanize me.

Episode 12: Silly Love Songs

Song: Fat Bottomed Girls, originally performed by Queen

Glee Performer: Noah Puckerman

Winner: Original

I am not a big Puck fan, which shocks my entire readership I'm sure. This song really has nothing going for it if you don't have the harmonies, and this does not in fact have the harmonies.

Song: P.Y.T (Pretty Young Thing), originally performed by Michael Jackson

Glee Performer: Artie Abrams

Winner: Original

Ryan Murphy absolutely LOVES having Artie sing a black man's song. I can't argue with the results, though. He's not as good as the original, but "worse than Michael Jackson" isn't exactly a scathing insult. Also, his backup singers are NOT carrying their weight.

Song: When I Get You Alone, originally performed by Robin Thicke

Glee Performer: The Warblers

Winner: Glee

So much Warbler this season. This song title does make it sound like Robin Thicke is threatening me, which, given his background, is a bit scary! This is the easiest win I've given Glee in this entire series.

Song: Firework, originally performed by Katy Perry

Glee Performer: Rachel Berry

Winner: Glee

Rachel's blow works annoyingly well for this song. This is going to sound odd but it doesn't really feel like a cover? This is one of the only Rachel songs that doesn't sound Glee cover-y, it just sounds like a song. Yes, "it sounds like a song" is barely praise, but trust me, it does the song a world of good.

Song: Silly Love Songs, originally performed by Wings

Glee Performer: The Warblers

Winner: Original

I like the piano.

Episode 13: Comeback

Song: Baby, originally performed by Justin Bieber

Glee Performer: Sam Evans

Winner: Glee

As much as I'm annoyed by Bieber as a person, and as bad as basically every song he ever released is, I must admit that this song was never actually bad. It was pretty overplayed though. Sam's voice is practically tailor-made for this kind of sugary bubblegum pop. Turns out adults are better singers than children, more news at 10.

Song: Somebody To Love, originally performed by Justin Bieber**Glee Performer: Sam Evans, Artie Abrams, Noah Puckerman and Mike Chang****Winner: Glee**

The original is uniquely vapid and tedious, so adding Artie to it really does help make it tolerable. Artie's pretty good, and Justin Bieber is pretty bad.

Song: Take Me Or Leave Me, originally performed by Rent**Glee Performer: Rachel Berry and Mercedes Jones****Winner: Glee**

Why is Rachel wearing a bisexual sweater? What did she mean by this? I'd say Mercedes carries here, but Rachel is also just a lot better in duets (that aren't with Finn) and group numbers, since they tend to make her more interesting.

Song: I Know What Boys Like, originally performed by The Waitresses**Glee Performer: Lauren Zizes****Winner: Original**

Pretty good acting, even if Zizes can't really sing. It sucks that Lauren didn't stick around for another season, she made Puck almost tolerable.

Song: Sing, originally performed by My Chemical Romance**Glee Performer: New Directions****Winner: Glee**

This one is going to be controversial, I can feel it. If you want to send me hatred or death threats, my instagram is @joebiden. This one is kind of hard to justify honestly, the Glee cover just feels nice on my brainmeats. The original has a worse bridge, and thus has no notable effect on my brainmeats.

Episode 14: Blame It On The Alcohol**Song: Don't You Want Me, originally performed by The Human League****Glee Performer: Rachel Berry and Blaine Warbler****Winner: Original**

Yes, this plotline is awful in about 15 different ways. We've all agreed to pretend it never happened. Anyways, this cover is just kind of more boring.

Song: Blame It, originally performed by Jamie Foxx**Glee Performer: New Directions****Winner: Glee**

The autotune in the original is not my thing. Plus, Mercedes and Artie pair well.

Song: One Bourbon, One Scotch, One Beer, originally performed by George Thorogood**Glee Performer: Sheldon Beiste and Will Schuester****Winner: Original**

Neither of these characters can sing at all.

Song: Tik Tok, originally performed by Ke\$ha**Glee Performer: Brittany S. Pierce****Winner: Original**

I demand that all Glee Project readers go listen to Kesha's newest album. Now, despite my loyalties to Kesha, I cannot in good faith call Tik Tok a good song, as much as I enjoy it. And yet, Brittany's vocals are lacking. She's good on the chorus but the verses are kind of weak.

Episode 15: Sexy**Song: Do You Wanna Touch Me (Oh Yeah), originally performed by Joan Jett****Glee Performer: Holly Holiday****Winner: Original**

This may be shocking to hear about a character played by Gwyneth Paltrow, but Holly's voice just has no edge to it.

Song: Animal, originally performed by Neon Trees

Glee Performer: The Warblers

Winner: Glee

The Glee version is just plain fun. It's good vibes! It's one of the few songs where I genuinely feel the acapella elevates it.

Song: Kiss, originally performed by Prince

Glee Performer: Will Schuester and Holly Holliday

Winner: Original

This song opens with Mr. Schuester passionately grunting. That's it, that's the review. I need not elaborate.

Song: Landslide, originally performed by Fleetwood Mac

Glee Performer: Holly Holliday with Santana Lopez and Brittany S. Pierce

Winner: Original

The INTENSE banjo in the Glee arrangement kind of ruins the song! Holly is also just not that good but frankly that ends up being secondary. You won't believe me about the banjo unless you go listen to the song, but it's bad. I wish they had let Santana sing lead instead, she would have killed.

Song: Afternoon Delight, originally performed by Starland Vocal Band

Glee Performer: The Abstinence Club

Winner: Glee

Yes, the Abstinence Club. Normal show. Now, neither of these is very good. But ultimately Starland Vocal Band does suffer from not having any Quinn Fabray.

Episode 16: Original Song

Song: Misery, originally performed by Maroon 5

Glee Performer: The Warblers

Winner: Glee

Maroon 5 is a profoundly awful band, their first album aside (She Will Be Loved is very good). Adam Levine is a horribly unpleasant man vocally speaking, and Blaine Warbler is far more tolerable.

Song: Blackbird, originally performed by The Beatles

Glee Performer: Kurt Hummel

Winner: Original

I will never be a Beatleshead, unfortunately. But at least The Beatles never did a cappella.

Song: Candles, originally performed by Hey Monday

Glee Performer: The Warblers

Winner: Original

I actually hadn't listened to the original version of this prior to this project. Before, I merely found this cover annoying. Now I believe that Hey Monday deserves financial compensation.

Song: Raise Your Glass, originally performed by P!nk

Glee Performer: The Warblers

Winner: Original

I miss when Pink made good music. Now, I like both songs, but not enough to give the Glee version a tie. Blaine Warbler is just an inferior performer.

Episode 17: Night of Neglect

Song: All By Myself, originally performed by Celine Dion

Glee Performer: Sunshine Corazon

Winner: Original

There's this really excellent live performance by Dion of this song where she is moved to the point of tears. It's absolutely beautiful and unfortunately only accessible via Internet Archive, it's a whole thing. All this to say that, as good as the Glee version is, (and don't get me wrong, it's very good) it just doesn't pack the emotional punch that Celine Dion carries.

Song: I Follow Rivers, originally performed by Lykke Li**Glee Performer: Tina Cohen-Chang****Winner: Original**

This show is so mean to Tina for no reason. I like Tina! What did she do wrong? I rarely get chances to praise her performances because she has almost none but I do adore her vocally. However, Glee has messed around with the instrumentation to such a point that it sounds like it's being played with boomwhackers.

Song: Turning Tables, originally performed by Adele**Glee Performer: Holly Holiday****Winner: Original**

It's very difficult to go up against Adele and not just look silly.

Song: Ain't No Way, originally performed by Aretha Franklin**Glee Performer: Mercedes Jones****Winner: Tie**

Both are good and I feel strongly about neither.

Episode 18: Born This Way**Song: I Feel Pretty/Unpretty, originally performed by West Side Story / TLC****Glee Performer: Quinn Fabray and Rachel Berry****Winner: Glee/Glee**

This is often held up as an example of Glee covers that outstrip the original, and rightly so! Quinn is just an exemplary duet partner, she could make cardboard sound good.

Song: I've Gotta Be Me, originally performed by Sammy Davis, Jr.**Glee Performer: Finn Hudson****Winner: Original**

I'll grant it to him, this is one of Finn's better performances thus far. But at the end of the day, he doesn't really have much texture to his voice.

Song: Somewhere Only We Know, originally performed by Keane**Glee Performer: The Warblers****Winner: Original**

I have decided that I am actually no longer mostly neutral on The Warblers. I have simply heard too much acapella for one person. I think acapella is just an inferior form of music. Instruments are good, I love instrumentation. Replacing most of the instruments with prettyboys in ugly blazers does nothing for the quality of the song.

Song: As If We Never Said Goodbye, originally performed by Elaine Page**Glee Performer: Kurt Hummel****Winner: Original**

Some of these songs are just too damn long. Especially since I have to, you know, listen to every song twice. I don't think there's any strong thing to point to here that's the difference maker, I just think the sum total of Elaine Page's original exceeds the Glee cover. She soars much higher.

Song: Born This Way, originally performed by Lady Gaga**Glee Performer: New Directions****Winner: Original**

This one ended up being much harder to judge than expected! Mercedes is hard carrying as usual. But ultimately, Glee's rendition just ends up being less interesting than Gaga's.

Episode 19: Rumours

Song: Dreams, originally performed by Fleetwood Mac

Glee Performer: April Rhodes and Will Schuester

Winner: Original

The Fleetwood Mac tribute episode has always struck me as odd, demographically speaking. Glee is strangely classic rock heavy for a show mainly aimed at teens. Nobody on this planet can really compare with Stevie Nicks, but April is at least a step in that direction. Schuester does tank it though.

Song: Never Going Back Again, originally performed by Fleetwood Mac

Glee Performer: Artie Abrams

Winner: Original

This song is mostly guitar (but very good guitar, in fairness) so I can't easily evaluate it on any of the axes I usually do. The guitars are pretty clearly being treated as ancillary by Glee, which I do not respect.

Song: Songbird, originally performed by Fleetwood Mac

Glee Performer: Santana Lopez

Winner:

Santana almost gets there. She's so good! She just doesn't have the deep sadness in her voice that I'd want out of her.

Song: I Don't Want To Know, originally performed by Fleetwood Mac

Glee Performer: Quinn Fabray and Finn Hudson

Winner: Original

You know guys, I'm starting to think that this Dreams album might just be one of the best albums of all time or something!

Song: Go Your Own Way, originally performed by Fleetwood Mac

Glee Performer: Rachel Berry

Winner: Original

Well it's better than I was expecting, I will admit. I'll give Rachel "kind of good" for this one. But the original is a masterpiece, so it does kind of make her look like a joke.

Song: Don't Stop, originally performed by Fleetwood Mac

Glee Performer: New Directions

Winner: Original

The experience of listening to the original and then the Glee version back to back was uniquely jarring. They musical theater-ified it!

Episode 20: Prom Queen

Song: Rolling In The Deep, originally performed by Adele

Glee Performer: Rachel Berry and Jesse St. James

Winner: Original

Sucks so bad. This show has done a lot of Adele (five or six times, depending on how you count it) and with only two exceptions it tends to be very very out of its depth. This is by far the most odious of the show's Adele covers, the others are at least largely inoffensive.

Song: Isn't She Lovely, originally performed by Stevie Wonder

Glee Performer: Artie Abrams

Winner: Original

The Glee version isn't extended, and I can't give a win to an unfinished song. They should stop releasing songs but not extending them, it's really annoying.

Song: Friday, originally performed by Rebecca Black**Glee Performer: Artie Abrams, Sam Evans and Noah Puckerman****Winner: Original**

I think the media circus surrounding Friday is so pathetic that Glee trying to take advantage of the song's memetic status automatically gives it the loss, just for punching down. She was thirteen, you freaks need to get a life.

Song: Jar of Hearts, originally performed by Christina Perri**Glee Performer: Rachel Berry****Winner: Original**

Very odd slow dance song, but I can respect the passive-aggressiveness. I prefer Perri's understated delivery, I feel that Rachel is overdoing it here. "Rachel is overdoing it here" could be the review for solidly half of the show's songs.

Song: I'm Not Gonna Teach Your Boyfriend How to Dance with You, originally performed by Black Kids**Glee Performer: Blaine Warbler****Winner: Original**

Listening to the Glee version of this feels like witnessing a murder. What did they do to the production. It's just so much worse! The vocals don't even matter to me when Glee gutted the best part of the song.

Song: Dancing Queen, originally performed by ABBA**Glee Performer: Santana Lopez and Mercedes Jones****Winner: Original**

I'm going to be so honest, the Glee version could sound like literally anything and ABBA would still win. They're ABBA.

Episode 21: Funeral**Song: Back to Black, originally performed by Amy Winehouse****Glee Performer: Santana Lopez****Winner: Original**

She crushed this. Both of them, to be clear. But, very reluctantly, I must give the edge to Winehouse's. The lower key of it just lends it so much depth and body. It's a close one though.

Song: Some People, originally performed by Bette Midler**Glee Performer: Kurt Hummel****Winner: Original**

It's Bette Midler.

Song: Try a Little Tenderness, originally performed by Otis Redding**Glee Performer: Mercedes Jones****Winner: Glee**

Your daily reminder that Mercedes was better than Rachel and Jesse St. James is a racist who can't sing. Mercedes is gunning it here, and she absolutely tears it up.

Song: My Man, originally performed by Barbra Streisand**Glee Performer: Rachel Berry****Winner: Original**

Oh look, Rachel is doing that thing where she sheds a single tear again. Rachel Berry will never be more than a pale imitation of those who came before. She desperately wants to be Streisand, and is utterly incapable of replicating even a shard of her emotion or passion. Just machine perfection that nobody wants to listen to. Yes, I know, she's not real. It's the principle of the thing.

Song: Pure Imagination, originally performed by Gene Wilder

Glee Performer: New Directions

Winner: Glee

Very dignified for a cover of a song from Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.

Episode 22: New York

Song: I Love New York / New York, New York, originally performed by Madonna / On the Town

Glee Performer: New Directions

Winner: Glee/Original

This is not really doing anything I can meaningfully compare to New York, New York. That's the trouble with the mashups, is that they often lapse into being essentially original pieces. The Madonna song is a bit dull though, just a bit sauceless.

Song: Bella Notte, originally performed by Lady and the Tramp

Glee Performer: Noah Puckerman, Sam Evans, Mike Chang and Artie Abrams

Winner: Original

This show covers the strangest songs sometimes. Puck's part in this song made me want to try and escape my skin, and the song just never recovers from there. Imagine him breathing down your neck as he serenades you with this... The image is enough to drive one to drink

Song: For Good, originally performed by Wicked

Glee Performer: Rachel Berry and Kurt Hummel

Winner: Original

Another Rachel song, no more interesting than the ones before. They should have just stopped giving her showtunes, because whenever she sings one I very quickly begin to nod off.

Song: Yeah!, originally performed by Usher

Glee Performer: Unnamed female a cappella group

Winner: Glee

An anti-climactic end to the season, I know, but the last three songs of the season are Glee originals, which is a shame because it means I don't get to talk about As Long As You're There which is one of the best songs the show ever did. The New Directions originals are decidedly dull though, none of their Nationals songs are as memorable as Loser Like Me, a song I don't even like that much but recognize as being high quality. Still, we could end on worse notes, since this cover is randomly kind of incredible. The group's costuming goes hard too, though I don't factor that into my ranking. You may be unnamed, female a capella group, but you won Nationals in my heart.

Next time on The Glee Project: I am angrier at Will Schuester than I ever have been in my life and boy is that saying a lot.



Game Recommendations from Winter Break

by Nicholas/Mae Utakis-Smith

I ended up playing a bunch of video games over winter break, here were the ones I enjoyed the most. All of these mini-reviews are spoiler-free, and though none of my reviews cover any of the sensitive areas of the games, relevant content warnings for the games themselves, as well as links to download or purchase each of the games., are paired with each of the reviews

Laika: Aged through Blood

Developers: Brainwash Gang

Link: https://store.steampowered.com/app/1796220/Laika_Aged_Through_Blood/

Content Warnings: (as stated in the game's title screen): "This game contains depictions of extreme acts of violence towards children and suicide, and mention of sexual assault, which some players may find distressing."

I submitted a first impressions review to the last issue of the omen, but god damn this game is good. With a lot of the games I've played I feel like the games with emotionally moving, thematically interesting stories have gameplay that just does what it needs in order to serve the story, and games with fun gameplay have stories that spice up the gameplay. Laika is one of the most fun action games I've ever played and it's a story that I'm going to be thinking about for months or even years afterwards. It's a beautifully bleak and depressing tragedy that becomes more powerful because the player can, by talking to the characters and helping them out, bring a ray of hope to the story. About a week after playing this game I came to a sudden realization that a particular character's death was foreshadowed by one of Laika's unlockable skills. Laika: Aged Through Blood's steam page describes it as "The very first MOTORVANIA!", as it somehow makes a metroidvania played entirely on a motorcycle feel right.

Brainwash Gang didn't just slap motorcycle mechanics into a regular platformer level, they created an interconnected map designed to be navigated by motorcycle, filled with ramp jumps, loop-de-loops, and enough checkpoints to make the frequency of deaths by crashes and gunshots feel encouraging rather than frustrating.

The gameplay speaks for itself, as the game has an incredibly thorough demo. Yet at the end, despite feeling like it was a perfect experience, I wanted something like more health or a second phase on the final boss; I felt like I could still push the combat system even further past the point the game expected of me. Laika is a 10/10 game in my opinion, and despite being the first "Motorvania", I hope that it is not the last.

Disco Elysium

Developers: ZA/UM art collective

Link: https://store.steampowered.com/app/632470/Disco_Elysium_The_Final_Cut/

Content Warnings:

Disco Elysium has won a lot of awards for some variation of "game of the year 2019" and it absolutely deserves all of those awards. I haven't finished the game as of writing, but discussing the themes and ideas of the story in detail would probably spoil a bunch of stuff anyway. My favorite area in the game so far has been the abandoned commercial district. This area has you examine several businesses that went under for various reasons, such as an ice cream company that tried to market their ice cream via a real taxidermied polar bear. One of the remaining business owners, a bookstore owner named Plaisance, is convinced there is some kind of curse on the businesses.

I convinced her to let me investigate the failed businesses by saying I was a paranormal detective, and when I returned she asked whether or not I had figured out the source of the curse. The options the game gives you include telling her there is no curse, as her and one of the other business owners seem to be spared from it seemingly arbitrarily, lying and telling her the defunct taxidermy business is the source of the curse, saying you don't have an answer, or the option I chose: "There is another Entity, more malignant, pulling the strings in Martinaise [the neighborhood this section of the game

takes place in]. Perhaps in my travels I will cross paths with it.” This option fascinates me, because the option to blame the curse on the taxidermist is marked with a “(lie)” at the beginning, and the “another Entity” option isn’t. Afterwards, I found an intercom connected to all the businesses in the area. Most of these will give you no answer, as all the businesses are dead. However, one of the options will start a conversation with someone who says she never wanted to hear “your” voice again. Initially, Harry Du Bois (the protagonist) assumes he was terrible to this person at some point, which is believable given that similar conversations happen with other characters. However, further investigation reveals this to be some recording that got stuck in the intercom somehow. Disco Elysium’s world is realistic and grounded, but it is possible to interpret these events in a way that imagines them as supernatural and beyond human understanding. Many elements of this game’s world, and of the things that go on in Harry’s head, are supernatural, and the game has this air of magical realism even when nothing supernatural is happening.

Of course, any recommendation of this game comes with the big caveat that the actual people who made the game left ZA/UM involuntarily and no longer receive any of the profit¹. I think this game is still worth playing, especially if you already own it, can get it on sale like I did, or have some other means of obtaining the game. Additionally, another caveat is that this game is extremely performance-heavy for a point-and-click adventure/rpg, and not very optimized for non-gaming PCs. My computer is a fairly high quality office laptop that runs any non-game program smoothly, but struggles with graphically intensive games like Doom Eternal or Street Fighter 6. Triple-A action games are often expected to have these kinds of issues, but I didn’t expect this from a story-driven top-down point-and-click adventure game. My computer still ran it well, but with two issues. First, booting up the game takes a while. It doesn’t take that long, so it doesn’t feel like I’m waiting, but it took me by surprise when it first happened and I thought the game crashed. Secondly, there’s one scene where a character asks you to wait in place while he leaves to do something for you, only for me he never came back, my character waiting in cutscene endlessly. This was a very funny bug, and I resolved it by turning the resolution down to minimum for this one specific scene, and it also isn’t something that would happen in every playthrough (the only reason I ended up asking this character for help was as a last resort after several failed skill checks). Nevertheless, this did affect my experience playing the game.

1. Walker, John. “Writer of Groundbreaking RPG Disco Elysium Suing Former Studio [Update].” Kotaku, Kotaku, 24 Oct. 2022, kotaku.com/disco-elysium-robert-kurvitz-suing-za-um-rpg-amazon-1849693328.

Star of Providence

Developers: Team D-13

Link: https://store.steampowered.com/app/603960/Star_of_Providence

Star of Providence is another case of developers being screwed by legal issues, though in a more minor way: the game was originally released as Monolith, but the name was changed, presumably to avoid legal issues. The game is a roguelike dungeon crawler bullet-hell twin-stick shooter. It isn’t the first game to combine those genres, being comparable to Enter the Gungeon, The Binding of Isaac, or Nuclear Throne. The game starts off with much more difficult enemy patterns than any of those games, with each floor involving not only a variety of enemy patterns in each of the rooms and a boss at the end of the level, but also a mini-boss that the player is required to find in order to beat the level.

However, the player starts with 10 hit points, and usually has access to several health pickups throughout the level. This allows the game to fit into a really nice balance of feeling easy to pick up but difficult to master, further augmented by rewarding the player for perfection in a variety of ways, such as increased money pickups when the player has a higher combo score. The resource management in this game is incredibly tight, where the risk of running out of ammo for your

weapon feels ever-present and every ammo pickup feels important. The room layouts and enemy designs are really creative, and they make every room feel like a blend of puzzle, stealth game, and bullet hell all in one. It also has multiple final bosses that you unlock by beating the game multiple times, making for a game experience that gets harder as you get better at it.

Haunted Cities Volume 4

Developer: Kitty Horrorshow

Link: <https://kittyhorrorshow.itch.io/haunted-cities-v4>

Content Warnings (As stated in a txt file paired with the collection):

- Grandmother's Garden: Death, oppression, body horror, emotional/child abuse
- Lethargy Hill: Family/emotional abuse, violence, depression, suicidal ideation, substance addiction
- Tenement: Suicide/death ideation, oppression

Haunted Cities Volume 4 is a collection of extremely short horror experiences that are all extremely good for their own reasons. My personal favorite is Tenement, where the player can explore a small urban neighborhood floating in the void.

The NPCs here are the highlight, floating animal skulls on top of well-dressed bodies who tell personal anecdotes that are often surreal and disturbing, but at the same time humanizing. It's one of the rare pieces of horror media that actually manages to make me feel more able to deal with my fear, by presenting the bizarre daily lives of these people as something they just live with. Things can get substantially more horrific if you end up reloading the game too many times, or if you venture off the edge of the map into the sewers, but I don't want to spoil too much of that. The collection is free on itch.io so if you are interested in horror I recommend checking it out.

Anatomy

Developer: Kitty Horrorshow

Link: <https://kittyhorrorshow.itch.io/anatomy>

Content Warnings (As stated in a txt file paired with the game): Distorted/flashing images, body horror, strong horror themes

Anatomy, similar to the individual horror experiences in Haunted Cities, is a short horror experience developed by Kitty Horrorshow (though this one costs \$3 instead of being free). The core loop of Anatomy involves finding a cassette tape somewhere in the dark house you're in, bringing it to the cassette player and listening to it, and having instructions appear on your screen telling you what room of the house the next cassette tape is located. These cassette tapes outline an extended metaphor for how one can metaphorically think of a house as a living body, in anatomical terms, which serves as set dressing for the fact that the house does appear to literally be alive. The doors in the house all start locked, but unlock as the player is instructed to find tapes in the rooms behind them, and you can even hear the locks to one of these doors click, though you can't see it in the dark. The game starts off with the main creepy factor just being the incredible lighting system; The player emits a small amount of light, but that light is only visible off of extremely close up furniture or walls - looking at the other end of a large room will literally plunge you into complete darkness. The game coasts of the inherent creepiness of the lighting by creating a house that is, for the most part, a normal suburban two-story house. Rather than baragging the player with disturbing set dressing, Anatomy lingers in its normality just long enough that the parts that are unsettling begin to really stick out. This is one of the two horror games I've ever played that has genuinely given me trouble sleeping.



an exact copy of my written letter to the president for the community's benefit as an open letter, notwithstanding edits to not disclose certain personal information on letter for obvious reasons

by Juniper Balbus-Holmquist

Juniper Balbus-Holmquist
Hampshire College, 893 West Street
Amherst Ma 01002

Mr. President,

In the first amendment of our great constitution it says “Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom ... to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.” Thus I am doing such. President Biden, I want to write to you not as a empathetic politician, or a politician with empathy, but as an empathetic human who became a politician through a holy and venerable combination of your own desire, and the all-important democratic practices of the people of Delaware as their senator and then the people of the United States as first Vice President, then President. I think deep down inside, you believe in the potential of the United States as a force for good in the world, or why else would you have entered the field of public representation and advocacy and lawmaking. I believe that you are a dealmaker, a strong negotiator, a master of Capitol Hill body politic, and most of all, a good representation of a leader. For unions, for American Jobs, for religious and racial unity and more. There are few weeks and months where I don’t contemplate the affect of your advocacy for gay marriage in the Obama administration on me and millions like me. Despite the polling numbers, I am at least, a member of the youth of this country grateful for your political presence.

And youth I am, I am a first-year student at one of America’s most venerably progressive learning institutions, Hampshire College in Amherst Mass. I write to you from my dorm room, as a 19 year old transgender woman, the daughter of a Jewish Father and Catholic Mother, who are a political theorist and a small business owner and practitioner of massage, cranial sacral therapy and other bodywork, respectively. I am a lifelong Democratic party voter, a likely critical theory and poetry major, and all around a politically engaged, empathetic, fiercely intelligent and most of all unique person. While we have our differences, you could variously describe me as a libertarian socialist, anarcho-syndicalist, or non-state communist, I believe that in this moment I have a power and a gift to offer you.

I, born in Chicago Illinois, the hometown of our 44th president, now in the core of American academia, know America both critically and lovingly, in all it’s confusion, self-sabotage, partiality, and also deep grace.

Thus I write to you with deep concern, of the yearning to be in the room with you, helping you make decisions, representing America with you. I feel like in my little way, it would be a failing not to speak for my generation in my biggest strength, my words. My dual faiths teach me that every human life is holy. That shared between Jews, Catholics (and deeply implicitly all people of the world) is a duty to uphold the sanctity of life, and to promote the conditions of peace. Mr President, this is not politics, this is humanity. I am writing you, as it is now clear, because I’m worried you will lose in 2024 due to the youth vote.

Let me lay out my reasoning. I believe that a great deal of voters of my generation would want the best for America. Two party system, electoral college, neoliberalism, core of the empire, capitalism, all that aside. What bonds the left and centre-left and all its associates together, from Trotskyists to Blue Dog Democrats? A commitment to reformist/revolutionary not reactionary politics.

We are fully sober, at least I hope, that not electing you, given the fact that Marianne Williamson and Cornel West won't win, even if to be blunt, many people among my large cohort find them ostensibly preferable, means electing Donald J. Trump. However, there's one thing stopping many people from doing the thing they'd like to do, which is to cast their first or second presidential vote for you. And it's not your age, your perceived centrism or anything like that.

It's the inconsistency between your professed Catholic faith and commitment to the greatness in America with your actions in the Middle East. Mr President, if you lose it will be almost singularly because of the fact that you have not called for a ceasefire in Gaza. I won't use any fancy buzzwords or try to distinguish a war from a genocide. Clearly that has already been said, and if poets, and protestors, and folk heroes, and Holocaust survivors don't make much impact in Washington, maybe speaking person to person, friend to friend will. I shall quote Shakespeare (who shares my birthday) from Julius Caesar "The evil that men do lives on, the good is oft interred with their bones". I am sure you have done very much good for the world. You have! You helped the environment, you protected unions, you got us through the pandemic. You have done so much good. You really really have. Here you must do the most radical and monumental good of your career. It's not a change, it's an upholding of the values you always had. That people deserve to feel seen, heard, protected, and loved by their government. This is merely the application of that from domestic policy to foreign policy. I am helping you not suffer from in-group bias.

Let me explain. I know that you have been through significant hardship in your life. Your son Hunter has struggled with addiction and mental illness, and simply does not deserve his villainy in the media and the right wing. I know, I had my struggles too, I know what it's like to be caught up in a darkness you can't escape, until maybe you can. Your first wife, Nelia Hunter Biden, and your daughter Naomi Biden, died in a horrific crash. Your son Beau survived only to die of brain cancer. I mourn your losses and cherish your accomplishments. That is empathy, that is to be human. These memories are likely painful and at this point rote to mention. But I bring them up because they set a painful precedent for extrapolation. In the Gaza Strip, seventeen to twenty thousand non-combatant civilians have been murdered by the Israeli military with, as uncomfortable as it is, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, Boeing and Raytheon weaponry and systems. American made has taken on a whole different, more sinister meaning. I have seen graphic videos, as I'm sure you have, of elders holding dead babies and children, children and babies holding dead elders. Does it not affect you, knowing that they feel the same that your losses felt? That entire bloodlines dating back to the time of Christ, some of the very first Christians in the world among the Palestinian Christians killed, many NGOs state might be eradicated by this campaign? That Muslims, our fellow Children of Abraham, might matter too?

Day after day, I see the horrors and I'm reminded of what Jews suffered throughout the centuries, culminating in the atrocities of 1936-1945. I know that Never Again, means Never Again, for anyone, anywhere, anytime, ever. In former Yugoslavia, in Rwanda, and now simultaneously in Palestine, DRC, Sudan, Haiti, Armenia, Ukraine, Xinjiang, Myanmar, Sudan, South Sudan, Yemen, and the Tigray province of Ethiopia.

This is unbearable for the empathetic human, the poet, the dancer, the organizer, the actor, the theorist, but somehow not the politician? This is probably on your radar, in your daily briefings. What do you make of it? To see Palestinian men forced to strip, and then executed into open graves? What if anything does this remind you of? I think I know what it does for me, having visited both Illinois and National Holocaust museums. This is the teaching of my religion—that the first breath is the birth of life and the last breath is when you die. Now imagine with me for a moment, poetically, what if feels like to lose everything, to lose your ability to fight on, for it to be done, finito, fin. Whether you go to heaven, hell or something else entirely, your earthly work is over. Now imagine, you are 6 weeks old, 6 months old, 6 years old, 106 years old. What have you been robbed of. What could you have been. Doesn't this hurt? Isn't this the rawest, sorest wound that exists, untimely death? I speak for the dead, Mr. President, and I hope the Palestinian people survive this horror, this Nakba.

It is shameful to equate antisemitism with anti-zionism.

Because I am a Jew, I had my Bar Mitzvah, I own a Tallis and Yarmulke, I rejoice every Passover. Am I anti-myself, in the words of AIPAC, self-hating. Better yet, are the dozens or even hundreds of Holocaust survivors who have spoken out against the Israeli-American alliance's actions self-hating? I think it is now clear the hypocrisy. By the logic of the U.S. house's recent resolution, in all its shame, the largest Hasidic sect in the world is antisemitic because of forcefully and resoundingly being anti-zionist, anti-Israel, yet as visibly Jewish as you can get. Isn't that resoundingly Orwellian? I assume to some Israel's freedom is contingent on Palestine's slavery. 1984 was a very prescient work. I could also throw in— all animals are equal but some are more equal than others, because that seems to be the current status quo.

But I don't actually enjoy being cynical, because I'm asking for action not despair. Despair defeats action. All the world needs for your iconic status as a maker of history, is a ceasefire, permanent, true and lasting. It is genocidally cynical to talk about after the "war" when it is still going on. After the war there'll be a good Europe... with 6 millions Jews dead. It rings the same. Truth be told, the US was deficient in WWII as well, if we had let in more Jewish refugees how many would be saved if that boat had docked in NY and not turned around. So maybe we can atone for Hiroshima, and Nagasaki, and the My Lai massacre and the secret campaigns in Laos and Cambodia, and our eugenicist refugee policy, and our illegal intervention in Iraq, by doing the thing our founders intended, or were too nearsighted to intend, depending on your view. America as a custodian of world peace, instead of the Monroe Doctrine, consider the Biden Doctrine.

It is such: we atone for our oppressive and colonial sins, we call for a ceasefire, we join the international criminal court, we question the CIA's culpability in coups, massacres and general suffering inflicted on the Global South. This is what I see as the future of the Democratic Party. It's no secret that the youth have moved left, often to revolutionary positions. But we mostly recognize that we must work with electoralists, not against them, if to achieve great meaning in policy. I think that your empathy is beyond your politics, but they are not at all incompatible. This is the path I pleasantly suggest you take. Hope is real, but I am not in the room where it happens, you are. Can you speak for me and the dead? Can you do what I think is right, ethically and politically. I know history will honor you, more, not less, if that is your choice. The ball is yours.

With Compassion and Sincerity and Pride,
Juniper Robert Balbus-Holmquist

19 years old
She/They

Hampshire College Freshman and American Citizen

P.S. I would appreciate a full and considered written reply from you, your office, or your staffers, considering the gravity and length of this memo.



An open band call for Drummer & Bassist by Juniper Balbus-Holmquist

Patchouli Cyanide is looking for drummer + Bassist!!!!

Patchouli Cyanide a former solo project, now band operating in the Skramz, Shoegaze, Post-Rock, Midwest Emo, Fusion, extreme metal, and Noise Rock genres.

FFO: Swans, Slint, Sprain, Model/Actriz, Mandy Indiana, Gilla Band, Sunn o))), Les Rallizes Denides, Kan Mikami, Foxtails, I hate Sex, Indian Summer, Low, , G.I.S.M, Godspeed you black emperor, Black Midi, My Bloody Valentine, Title Fight, Jesus Lizard, Hanatarash, Merzbow, Prurient, AMM, Sonny Sharrock, Modest Mouse, Boredoms, Lingua Ignota, Mitski, Phoebe Bridgers

You're a perfect fit if you are: professional, cooperative, collaborative, able to improv, listen to ALL ALL music, technically proficient at your instrument, comfortable with dark and intense lyrics, able to do background vocals, prefer to operate at high volume, can lift 60-100 pounds, comfortable with an intense and prominent frontwoman, able to have substantial fun, maybe have a car, comfortable with any scale of musical success, will push for big name openings and take it seriously, has played to at least 500 people.

All inquiries can be directed to sib23@hampshire.edu or 312-593-4660.



Do you want to make



MOVIES
and get Credit for it?

**Help me, Vi get this class
made by putting your name
in this survey**

Making Movies by Vi Pataco



and for more info email Vsp22@hampshire.edu

Howdy, I'm Vi and I am attempting to make a student led course under the supervision of Eva Rueschmann. Its current plan is to be open to writers, videographers, video editors, and more film related studies. The main focus will be to produce three films in about 3 months.



**Hampshire College Theatre Presents:
"The Mary Todd Lincoln Regional High School
Drama Club Presents:
'George Orwell's Wild Wacky Super-Cool
(educationally enriching) Musical Barnyard
Caper"**

AUDITIONS

Friday February 9: 5:30-7:30

Saturday February 10: 1-3



Monologues

Please come prepared with 16-32 bars of a song of your choice to be performed acapella and one of the provided monologues (not memorized). All experience levels are encouraged to audition!

Callbacks will be Sunday Feb. 11 from 2:30-4:30.



SECTION LIES

Feele the rain on your skin
No one else can feel it for you
Only you can let it in
No one else
No one else
Can speak the words on your lips

yeah

by J. E. Cramer



in and out

by Clay Kesling

Sometimes I just sit and breathe.

In

Out

In

Out

In today's day, the in and out of breath has become a luxury-privilege.

The air fills our lungs as the smoke fills our clouds

Lungs take in air... like a currency

Inflation

It's been this way for some duration

Last stop at the train station, but ~~no~~ bodies there

LAST TICKET!

Only for the billionaire

Causation and deregulation leading to unfettered beration

Air pollution, but there is a solution

X equals b plus c minus you and me

Carry the b for billionaire

They stay

Meanwhile, we pay

Look at the neighborhoods around the factories

It's a poem but I'll still break it down

When the factory is fined for environmental infractions like bad air-with no care-

The fine is higher in communities of affluence or whiteness

But when it comes to the marginalized-bipoc-and lower socioeconomically-the fines are low

This influences the creation of the factories-the willingness to violate regulatory laws

in these communities-the property value-increase in cancer and disease-Increase in mental health
issues

Air pollution is one of the leading causes of death amongst inner-city residents

Bite the bullet, but only when there's a slap on the wrist

Don't act surprised when people rise up with a fist

FIGHT BACK!

SPEAK UP!

The very breath you breathe will soon be breathless
Regulated by the government
Take in the particulates and the deadly air
Pay with your life, and they still don't care
Sweep it under and move on
It isn't a piece of politics or an issue to be pondered
This is life or death.

This is humans.

This is life.

This is breath.



Seep- Reap

by Clay Kesling

Mosses, flowers, trees, fruits, bushes

Wet soil. Water seeping down in between the roots. Giving all these wondrous things life.

The woods-forests-mangroves-swamps-oceans-humans-animals breathe ever solemnly as of late.

In

Out

In

Out

The creatures and life within beckon with calls for an end to this human lust for destruction-death-sorrow-money.

GREED!

CAPITAL!

Rain still seeps into the soil.

Blood seeps into the soil, too.

Pesticides seep into the water that we drink from.

Pesticides and chemicals seep into the fruit that kids pack in their lunches.

Nuclear waste seeps into the ancestral grounds of the Indigenous.

Bury your history. But only the ones we choose.

Bury your dead. But only in places convenient for us. Also don't mind if we make the graveyards and ancestral homes a hazardous zone.

How can the Indigenous celebrate their customs, ancestral culture, and history of persistence and resistance- with no allowed access to the very grounds they buried their history-family?

Take the land

Take their money

Take the dead

Take their lives

Take their opportunity

Take their future

Leave behind nothing but radioactive waste. Waste that will outlive everyone. You and me.

Fuck this. Fuck that.

Sit and watch while history erodes into hazardous waste.

Factory runoff/waste runs through the rivers of marginalized groups.

Mostly BIPOC if we talk percentages.

Money seeps into the pockets of the corporations while cancer seeps into the communities of people who live in these runoff zones.

These rivers don't run through the white neighborhoods.

The wealthy don't fill their cups with polluted water nor do they receive the daily doses of cancer.

The factories go up brick by brick. Factory runoff in the water. Cancer rates rising. At least we give access to healthcare so they can get help or maybe even diagnosed? No

Instead, we keep building.

Keep 'em quiet.

Disposable.

Keep 'em poor.

Money still comes in the door.

Don't die though! We need you for the factories.

Oil seeps into the ocean

Seeps out of the rigs

Seeps into the pockets of the rich

Seeps out of the mouths of the fishes

Seeps into

Seeps out of

Seeps into

Seeps out of

While man continues along this path shrouded in death.

The trees still breathe.

The rain still seeps into the soil.

The flowers still sprout.

The mosses still grow.

But they also die and cry all the same.

Seep. Reap. Seeps. Reaps. Seeping. Reaping. Seeped. Reaped.



Aw Word Search

(a(w) word search with aw)

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aw



Section Hate

What's In My Meme Folder?

(Because someone needs to submit memes, SUBMIT! we needs memes guys I'm serious!!!)

By Maxine Aurelia-Ann Gamboa



**SORRY FOR
ACTING LIKE THAT**



IT WILL HAPPEN AGAIN

THE END



* Despite everything, it's
still you.